

**Quarterly Activity Report
Post-Hurricane Reconstruction Project
CD/EPO/Division of International Health
January-March 2002 (Quarter 2, FY02)**

El Salvador

1. Highlights of:

Main Activities:

- MSPAS preparation and response to an outbreak of horse mortality in two municipalities: established a feverish early warning system for patients showing fever with a neurological symptoms and a surveillance system on horse mortality.

Major Accomplishments:

- Completed selection process and started the training of the Second DDM (Data for Decision-making) cohort.
- Graduated the first cohort and inaugurated the second “Principles in Epidemiology” course.
- Trained 23 staff members of the health sector in Epi-info 2000.
- Additional funding was obtained (\$2.2 million) for development and implementation of the Project Reconstruction Post-Earthquake, which will continue the activities initiated by the Hurricane Mitch Project and to initiate additional activities.

2. IR1 – Health Information Systems

Indicator: Internal network at the National Epidemiology Unit

Progress:

- Partial establishment of the internal network for surveillance of notifiable diseases at the Epidemiology Unit.

Result:

- Have a working internal network for surveillance at the Epidemiology Unit.

Action:

- CDC Public Health Informatics experts conducted a need assessments in the Epidemiology Unit for the establishment of the surveillance network
- Need assessments results were delivered to the Epidemiology Unit Director in order for him to request the purchase of the required equipments to implement the network.

Future Activities:

- Prepare a work plan to develop the Epidemiological surveillance Information System for the Epidemiology Unit.

Indicator: Development of an injury surveillance system

Progress:

- Preparing the second draft document for the designing of an injury surveillance system

Result:

- Plan has been developed for surveillance of external cause injuries in El Salvador.

Action:

- Literature handed out to the surveillance committee of external cause injuries and to the FETP trainee responsible for the proposal.
- 200 staff members from three pilot hospitals (Rosales, Bloom and Nueva Concepción) were trained on the implementation of the external cause injury surveillance system at the hospital level. Pre and post- test were applied and a pilot study took place in each hospital.
- An evaluation workshop for the pilot study took place to make modifications to the used instruments as well as to define the timetable.
- Inaugurated the pilot injury surveillance project in the three hospitals.
- Sponsorship was obtained from the CDC Division of Violence Prevention, for the participation of the project coordinator to participate in the world congress of injuries in Canada.
- The printing of the data collection instruments was requested.

Future Activities:

- Deliver to the hospital coordinators the new data collection instruments in order to implement the hospital information system.
- Implement, monitor, and evaluate the injury surveillance system in the sentinel hospitals.
- Conduct pilot study in the Department of Cuscatlan and in the Legal Medicine Unit.

Indicator: Dissemination and information

Progress:

- Elaboration of weekly bulletins and national standards for control and prevention of dengue.

Result:

- Serial publications printed as well as others publications required by the Department of Epidemiology.

Action:

- Prepared weekly bulletins (coordinated by a trainee of the first FETP cohort).
- Identified a trainee from the first FETP cohort to be the coordinator for the preparation of the monthly national epidemiological bulletin.
- Delivered equipment and supplies for the implementation of different publications that the Epidemiology Unit requires.
- Printed the national standard for control and prevention of dengue.

Future Activities:

- Monthly preparation of the national bulletin epidemiological.
- Preparation of a weekly bulletin epidemiological.
- Placement of the bulletins in the network.
- Delivery and training of the staff members of the health sector in the enforcement of the national standard for control and prevention of dengue.

Indicator: Development of a HIV/AIDS Surveillance System

Progress:

- Held several coordination meetings to discuss the implementation of the HIV/AIDS surveillance system.

Result:

- Began implementing the HIV/AIDS surveillance system. The information collected will support the decision-making process of current and future HIV/AIDS issues.

Action:

- Conducted working meetings with CDC staff, Bernie Branson (USAID adviser) in order to define the HIV/AIDS surveillance system.
- Conducted working meetings to revise the collection instrument for HIV/AIDS data. Participants included staff members from MSPAS and PAHO.

Future Activities:

- Re-define and implement the surveillance system of HIV/AIDS at national level.
- Train the staff members from the Health Sector in the development of the Surveillance System.

3. IR2 – Increased Availability of Epidemiologists in the Region and Training of Other Level Health Workers by these Epidemiologists

Indicator: Successful completion of the FETP training

Progress:

- Trainees from the 1st and 2nd FETP cohorts are conducting outbreak investigations and finalizing their reports.

Result:

- 1st FETP cohort ready to graduate and 2nd cohort entering its second year.

Action:

- Prepared draft reports on the work conducted by the trainees of the 1st cohort.
- Continue developing outbreak investigations and epidemiological surveillance for the 2nd cohort.

Future Activities:

- Coordinate, monitor, and evaluate works of trainees.
- Field training – FETP trainees to investigate priority health issues under preceptor guidance.

During the quarter, FETP trainees initiated or continued developing their epidemiological proficiency on the following priority health problems

FETP output during quarter	Initiated (Date)	Status	Completed (Date)
Outbreak Investigation - Leptospirosis Outbreak in San Miguel Horses neurological diseases outbreak, in Cabañas, and Usulután - Outbreak of accidental Poisoning by `chlorhexidine`, Ahuachapan - Study of typhoid fever cases	01/2002 03/2002 03/2002 01/2002	Descriptive Analytical epi: in progress, Descriptive Analytical epi Descriptive	04/2002
Surveillance Studies - Leptospirosis evaluation Surveillance System, La Libertad	03/2002	Draft	12/2002

- Analysis of TB Surveillance, La Paz - Design of surveillance of injuries of external cause at the national level	03/2002 02/2002	Draft Draft	11/2002
Planned Epi Project - Community intervention in dengue, Ahuachapan	08/2001	in progress	05/2002
Communications Products - Presentations oral two of the outbreaks of deaths of neurological disease in horses in light of physician and Epidemiologists Cabañas and Usulután - Presentations oral one of outbreak of leptospirosis in light of physician and Epidemiologists of San Miguel	03/2002 02/2002	Presented	

Indicator: Local epidemiological capacity strengthened – DDM Course

Progress:

- Forty students are enrolled in the second DDM course. Eight tutorial classes have been completed.

Result:

- Forty local public health staff attended the classes.

Action:

- Defined and implemented process selection for participants of the second DDM class.
- Conducted an opening ceremony and started teaching the second DDM course.
- Two books were delivered to each of course participants.
- Purchased and delivered equipment necessary for the course to the University.

Future Activities:

- Conduct evaluation of first DDM class to improve its quality.

Indicator: Local epidemiological capacity strengthened - Principle of Epidemiology Course (3030G)

Progress:

- Eighty students are enrolled in the second course. They have started going over the self-study course book. To complete the course, students will have to take a final exam.

Result:

- Eighty students from the first course completed the *Principle of Epidemiology Course* and have taken the final exam. Only 34 students successfully passed the final exam.

Action:

- The El Salvador Training Technical Committee met to evaluate and define the methodology to be applied in the development of the second course.
- Eighty students were selected to participate in the second 3030G course. An opening ceremony for the course was held in March.

Future Activities:

- Administration of the final exam. Upon successful completion of the course, students will receive a course certificate of completion.

4. IR3 – Laboratory Rehabilitation

Indicator: Internal Network of the Central laboratory

Progress:

- The priority laboratories from the National Laboratory Network have been equipped and adapted.

Result:

- Central laboratories as well as laboratories from the National Laboratory Network were provided with equipment and reagents.

Action:

- Laboratory equipments and reagents have been delivered to the hospital laboratories at the central level.

Future Activities:

- Delivery and supply of other reagents.

Indicator: Arrangement of physical areas for clinical laboratories at the national level.

Progress:

- Remodeling of the Dengue and bacteriology laboratory sections in Cara Sucia, Acajutla.

Result:

- Dengue and bacteriology laboratory sections physical area improved.

Action:

- Physical arrangements were completed at the Dengue and bacteriology sections of the laboratory in Cara Sucia, Acajutla.

Future Activities:

- Implementation of physical improvements at the central level.

Indicator: Laboratory staff trained to respond to priority areas

Progress:

- Staff members trained in new laboratory techniques/procedures.

Result:

- Trained 22 staff members from national and international institutions.

Action:

- Get 2 staff members to attend updated workshop on quality assurance and laboratory audit (Miami, Florida).

Future Activities:

- Duplicate training in the National Laboratory Network by the trained staff.

Indicator: Internal information Network in the Central Laboratory

Progress:

- Personnel from the National Laboratory informed and organized to be in charge of the network.

Result:

- Established an information network among the most important laboratories from the network and the central laboratory.

Action:

- Delivered and installed equipment and other supplies needed to implement the communication network for the central laboratory.

Future Activities:

- Train staff at all levels in the use and advantages of the information network to support epidemiological surveillance.

5. IR4: Community-based Interventions

Indicator: Dengue Prevention and Control intervention

Progress:

- Implementation of a community intervention in Ahuachapan.

Result:

- Community intervention implemented for control and prevention of dengue in Ahuachapan.

Action:

- Provided feedback to the health units and to the three pilot communities.
- Met with the evaluator responsible for the implementation of the community intervention in La Gloria in Ahuachapan.
- Conducted site visit to supervise the development and progress of the intervention
- Met with the SIBASI and Health Unit Directors in Ahuachapan.

Future Activities:

- Development, implementation, and evaluation of the Dengue community intervention.

6. Important Administration Issues

- An office assistant has been contracted to provide administrative support.

7. Other Meetings

- Conducted biweekly meetings with the FETP trainees and the Technical Training Committee of El Salvador. The purpose of the meetings is to review an academic subject, present progress, provide feedback to trainees' outbreak studies and their work, and to perform the review of a scientific article.
- Participated in meetings with the national violence committee from the Ministry of Health to deal with subjects related to national surveillance of external cause injuries.
- Met with the members of the training technical committee to determine admission criterion to the DDM and 3030G programs.
- Met with the members of the Epidemiological Surveillance Committee to review the epidemiological situation and present the outcomes from outbreak investigations. In addition, it was considered important to start planning the second National Epidemiology Conference and to create a national public health award.
- Met with USAID staff to define the implementation strategy for the post earthquake reconstruction project. Consultations with staff members from MSPAS and of other organizations as COEN Legal medicine have been considered.

8. Visitors

- CDC consultants Juan Zubieta and Ilse Cerda have supported the evaluation needs for the establishment of an internal network in the situational at the National

Epidemiology Unit. The consultants also gave a training course on Epi-Info 2000 to 23 staff members from the national epidemiology unit, national injury surveillance system at hospital level, FETP trainees and members of the technical training committee and gave some recommendations in order to develop the Information System.

- Elmer Arias reviewed the project expenditures, the progress of the project, and prepared expenditure projections for the upcoming quarter. He is also preparing an equipment inventory to be donated to MSPAS at the end of the project.

9. Challenges/Difficulties

- The project vehicle was stolen on March 26 while being used by the coordinator of the National Epidemiology Unit. Police and insurance reports have been filled out. To this date, the national counterpart hasn't yet requested the repairs of the damaged equipment, nor has reported to the national police the missing of two GPS donated by the project.